

### **Remarks**

This communication responds to the Office Action mailed October 13, 2004 for the application captioned above. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 3-6 under 35 U.S.C. §112, rejected claims 1-12, 14-22, and 24-34 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), and rejected claims 13 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §103. In light of the amendments above and the remarks below, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 3-6 under §112 because the phrase “the keel portion” lacks antecedent basis. Claims 3-6 have been amended above to delete the term “portion,” leaving the term “the keel” in each of these claims. In light of these amendments, Applicant submits that the rejection under §112 should be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-12, 14-22, and 24-34 under §102(b) as being anticipated by Mardikian (US 4,932,347). In light of the amendments above and the remarks that follow, Applicant respectfully disagrees and requests reconsideration.

Mardikian does not disclose a “generally v-shaped center keel” in which the “keel has a central keel angle that is smaller” at a rear longitudinal limit than at a front longitudinal limit, as recited in claim 1. Similarly, Mardikian does not disclose a “center keel portion” that is “generally v-shaped,” as recited in independent claims 17, 26, and 31.

On the central portion of the Mardikian bottom hull is a central section 30 that includes, at different longitudinal locations along the bottom hull, a flat section 30a (Figs. 7 & 8), a semi-cylindrical portion 30b (Fig. 8), and a flat ride plate 30d (Fig. 9). None of which are center keels having a generally v-shape. The handling of such a bottom hull shown in Mardikian is much different from the “generally v-shaped center keel,” as recited in independent claims 1, 17, 26, and 31. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the §102(b) rejection of claims 1, 17, 26, and 31 based on Mardikian should be withdrawn. Since claims 2-8, 18-25, 27-30, and 32-34 depend

from one of independent claims 1, 17, 26, or 31, Applicant submits that the §102(b) rejections of claims 2-8, 18-25, 27-30, and 32-34 based on Mardikian should be withdrawn for at least the same reason.

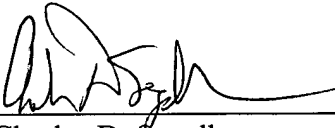
With respect to independent claim 8, Mardikian does not disclose the “keel portion terminating forward of the water inlet.” As shown, for instance, by Figures 5 and 9 of Mardikian, the ride plate portion 30d of the central section 30 defines a pair of spaced downwardly protruding wings 50 and 52. The cross-section shown in Figure 9 is taken rear of the water inlet 30c. Therefore, to the extent that Mardikian discloses a keel, the keel does not terminate forward of its water inlet. The handling of such a bottom hull is much different from the hull where the keel terminates forward of the water inlet. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the §102(b) rejection of claim 8 based on Mardikian should be withdrawn. Since claims 9-16 depend from claim 8, the §102(b) rejection of claims 9-16 based on Mardikian should be withdrawn for at least the same reason.

In the Office Action, the Examiner also rejected claims 13 and 23 under §103 as obvious in light of Mardikian. Applicant respectfully disagrees. As noted above, claim 13 depends from claim 8 and claim 23 depends from claim 17. Mardikian does not disclose or suggest the termination of the keel portion forward of the water inlet as recited in independent claim 8. Nor does Mardikian disclose or suggest the generally v-shaped center keel of claim 17. Accordingly, for at least the same reason, Mardikian does not render obvious dependent claims (claims 13 and 23) that stem from these independent claims 8 and 17.

Applicant believes no fee is due to enter the present Amendment. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional filing fees required to Deposit Account No. 061910. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if the Examiner believes it would be useful to advance prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: Feb. 14, 2005

  
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Charles D. Segelbaum  
Reg. No. 42,138  
(612) 492-7115

Customer No. 22859  
Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.  
200 South Sixth Street, Suite 4000  
Minneapolis, MN 55402-1425 USA  
Telephone: (612) 492-7000  
Facsimile: (612) 492-7077

*Please grant any extension of time necessary for entry; charge any fee due to Deposit Account No. 06-1910.*

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